

Guide for Suppliers

Positive social and environmental impact

November 2024



Foreword



I'm pleased to share with you our Guide for Suppliers: positive social and environmental impact.

We are a unique group of financial services businesses, that gives all available profits to charities and good causes. Being owned by a charity - Benefact Trust - places good intentions at the foundations of our Group.

Our charitable ownership and commitment to our customers and communities means we have an opportunity to create a positive social and environmental impact in the world.

Our commitment to ethical business continues through our supply chain. We have the opportunity to work with hundreds of suppliers and collectively we can create a positive impact.

This guide sets out our commitments and outlines what we'd expect from our suppliers. It covers the social and environment issues that we believe are critical for businesses to engage with.

You can read more about our approach in [our responsible business report](#).

As a valued supplier, we would like you to use this guide to better understand our values, aspirations, and expectations of our partners. We are always eager to hear how we can work better together and improve our approach to responsible business.

We believe that everyone benefits from better business. I look forward to continuing to work with you as we build something bigger, that helps to better lives.

Mark Hews
Group Chief Executive

Introduction



Our expectations of our suppliers are grouped into these key areas:

Positive Social Impact



- Human rights and employment
- Supporting employees
- Ethics and Integrity
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Positive Environmental Impact



- Climate reduction and net zero
- Climate resilience and adaptation
- Waste, resource use and circular economy
- Biodiversity and the natural world
- Water

In each case, we describe our minimum expectations using the term **'we expect'**.

In some areas, we aspire to meet certain standards, and in these cases, we use the term **'we encourage'**.

These expectations complement our suite of Group Policies, some of which you may be asked to comply with depending on the services you provide to us.

What You need to do:

- Understand and agree to the standards set out in this guide.
- Share the principles of this guide with employees that support any Benefact Group businesses or work on our projects.
- If requested, complete the questionnaire on Hellios FSQS (Financial Services Qualification System). The questions in Hellios FSQS relate back to key principles in this guide.
- Speak up if you have any concerns or feedback relating to this guide. You can get in touch with our procurement team at procurement@ecclesiastical.com



Positive Social Impact



We're committed to doing better business, that helps to change lives for the better. We recognise the role we can play in making a positive impact on our employees, customers, suppliers, partners, local communities and wider society. As a minimum we require all our suppliers to:

- Conduct their business in an ethical and transparent way
- Comply with all legal requirements and legislation relating to their social impact
- Ensure all employees are treated fairly and equitably, with a safe working environment and adequate compensation
- Consider their own supply chain and sustainable procurement within their own organisations.

Human rights and employment

We are committed to our responsibilities to respect and uphold human rights across our business and wider community. We expect the same high standards from our suppliers.

At Benefact Group:	We expect suppliers to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We continue to submit our annual Modern Slavery Act declaration • All our colleagues undertake annual training on topics related to modern slavery • 100% of employees attested to our Code of Conduct in 2022, which covers modern slavery • Our investment business EdenTree continues to include 'Human Rights' and 'Employment & Labour' as two key ESG criteria • We're a Living Wage Employer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have procedures in place to identify and mitigate against modern slavery, complying with the Criminal Law (Human Trafficking) Amendment Act 2013 • Ensure working hours are in accordance with local regulation and avoid zero hours contracts • Educate employees on Modern Slavery and what role they play, especially in high-risk areas • Pay all employees the Living Wage.

Supporting employees

We're committed to being a great place to work - where all our people are treated fairly, given opportunities to grow and have a safe and healthy working environment.

At Benefact Group:	We expect suppliers to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our Health and Safety Committee ensures a safe and healthy working environment for all • A range of wellbeing resources are available to colleagues including mental health webinars. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a safe, healthy and supportive work environment for all employees • This includes providing full support and resources for employees' mental health. <p>We encourage suppliers to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage learning and development opportunities for employees where possible.

Ethics and Integrity

We act with the highest standards of fairness, transparency, and integrity in all our activities; and expect our suppliers to operate on the same basis.

At Benefact Group:	We expect suppliers to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For the 16th year, we've achieved Fairer Finance's top ranking for trust, transparency and complaint handling (UK direct insurance) We have robust risk management and employee regulatory training on topics such as whistleblowing Policies and processes in place to ensure we adhere to data regulation including GDPR We're working to improve the number of suppliers paid within 30 days (figure was 74% in 2022). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have policies and processes in place to stop fraud, money laundering, bribery and corruption Have reasonable payment policies with suppliers, that exclude unfair practices such as 'pay when paid' terms Comply fully with relevant data privacy regulation For those suppliers who have direct contact with our customers we expect outstanding levels of customer service; with regular training for employees who have contact with our customers.

Diversity, equity and inclusion

We're a diverse family of businesses – an inclusive culture is core to who we are. We're committed to being a business where everyone can belong and expect suppliers to share our values.

At Benefact Group:	We expect suppliers to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Our Diversity and Inclusion Network continues to meet regularly and host events We've developed a diversity and inclusion policy and set of guiding principles we commit to Annual training provided for employees We continue to be a founding and supportive signatory to the Women in Finance Charters in the UK and Ireland and publish annual gender pay reporting We're a member of the UK ABI's Talent and Diversity Network and Insurance Ireland's Diversity & Inclusion Taskforce Our investment business EdenTree took part in the 10,000 Black Interns Initiative. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure there is no discrimination within their organisation or own supply chains Meet and exceed the requirements of the Employment Equality Acts 1998-2015 and Equal Status 2000-2018 ensuring all products, services, and environments are fully inclusive Ensure that accessibility is always front of mind for customers, colleagues and clients. <p>We encourage suppliers to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foster an inclusive working culture for employees and actively promote diversity, equity and inclusion.



Positive Environmental Impact



We are committed to being a responsible business and recognise how dependent society and the economy are on a thriving natural world. As a minimum we require our suppliers to:

- Have relevant policies, procedures and processes in place to identify, control and mitigate their environmental impact
- Comply with all legal requirements and obligations
- Report any inspection from local government bodies, along with details of any official complaint, legal action or recommendation
- Have a legal and sustainable waste disposal route in place where reuse, recycling, refurbishment, recovery or composting are not possible (for example, hazardous waste and chemicals)
- Act to prevent any pollution which could result from their activities
- Have started assessing and practically addressing how climate change is affecting and may affect their suppliers and their own activities in the future.

Climate reduction and net zero

Climate change affects everyone and tackling it is everybody's responsibility. For us, that means addressing our current and historic carbon contributions, and where we can, supporting customers and communities in decarbonising too.

For example, we moved our UK / Group HQ into a new building that achieves 'very good' BREEAM sustainable standards, has solar panels, EV charging points and recycles heat from our server room. Across our offices, we are working to reduce single use plastic, our water use, and optimise our energy use. Our biggest source of emissions is our scope 3, so we are keen to work with our suppliers to collectively reduce our environmental impacts.

At Benefact Group:	We expect suppliers to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are committed to net zero emissions by 2040 for our direct and indirect emissions. Interim milestones include: net zero scope 1 & 2 emissions for 2022, net negative scopes 1 & 2 emissions by 2025 and wiping out our historic scopes 1 & 2 emissions by 2030. We are doing this by continuing to measure, monitor and reduce our emissions at the earliest opportunity. Emissions we cannot eliminate right now, we offset through nature based, verified projects that offer multiple social benefits. • We are engaging our employees on the climate crisis and are providing ways for them to reduce their footprint, inside and outside work. • We are committed to decarbonising the energy we use by using on site renewables and switching to renewable energy contracts where we can. • We are committed to optimising our energy use and pursuing energy efficiency measures wherever we can. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To have measured and understand the main drivers of their direct emissions footprint • To have a decarbonisation plan and target in place • To have started measuring their scope 3 emissions and be working towards a decarbonisation plan and target that includes scope 3 emissions. • Be actively looking to decarbonise their energy, whether through on-site renewables, renewable/ low carbon energy contracts or a combination of the two. • To be optimising their energy use and pursuing energy efficiency measures wherever possible. <p>We encourage suppliers to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be engaging their employees on the climate crisis and empowering them to act inside and outside work.

Climate resilience and adaptation

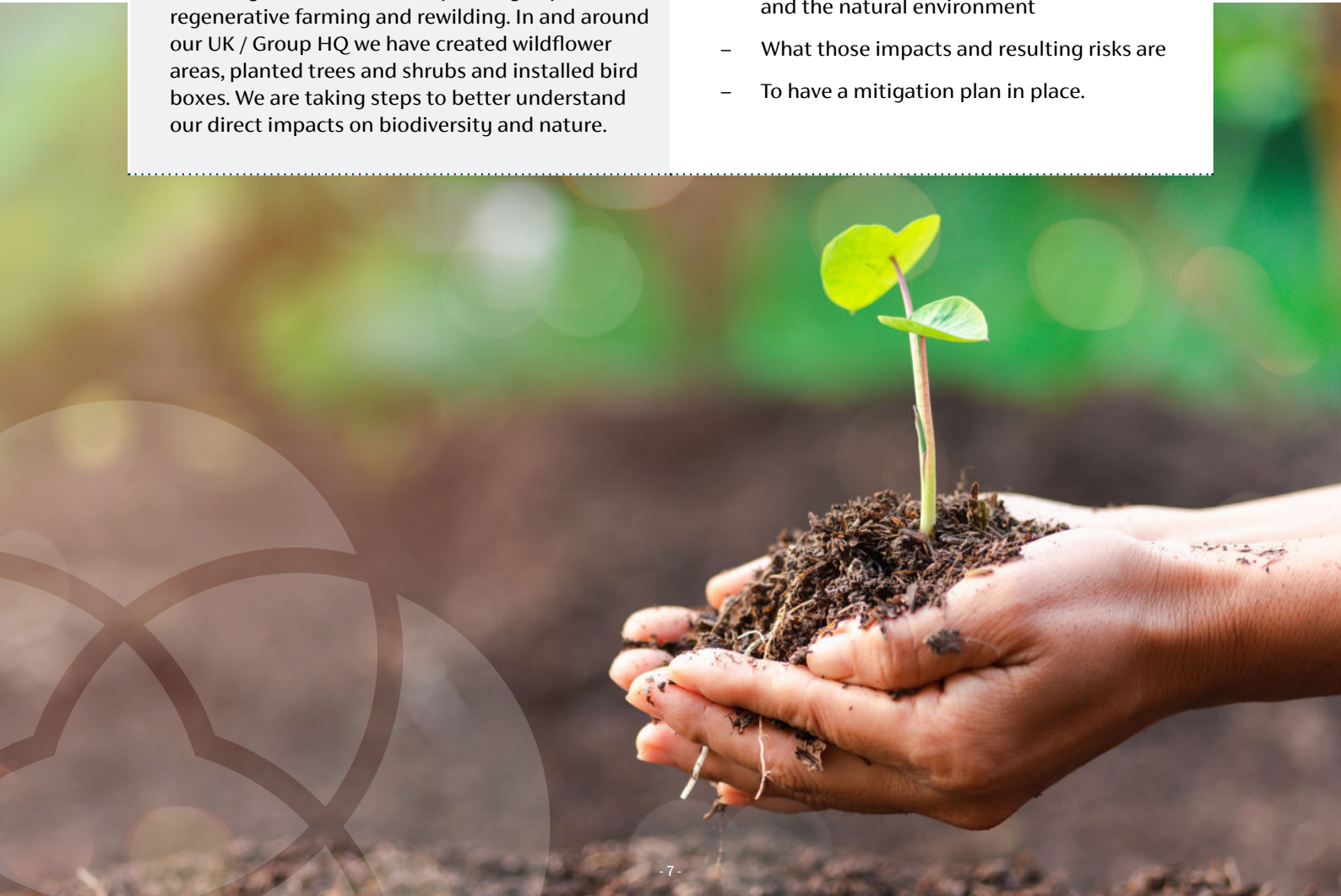
Failure to adapt to climate change is one of the biggest global risks identified by the World Economic Forum, in the short term (next 2 years) and longer term (10 years).

At Benefact Group:	We expect suppliers to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are continually assessing how climate change impacts our business and report our changing climate risk profile and our actions to mitigate our climate risks through industry initiatives and in our Annual Report • We are developing solutions for our customers and communities, to help them adapt to our changing climate. These include insurance cover for renewable energies and encouraging customers to take up a 'Green Clause' where feasible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To understand their key climate risks and have in place - or be developing - a plan to mitigate them • To offer products and services that help their customers to minimise their impact on the climate and on biodiversity.

Biodiversity and nature

Nature provides the conditions and raw materials that make life possible. Nature loss and climate change are interlinked – losses in one negatively impact the other. Decarbonisation requires restorative action in both areas. Which is why – along with climate change - biodiversity loss and ecosystem collapse is one of the biggest global risks identified by the World Economic Forum, in the short term (next 2 years) and longer term (10 years).

At Benefact Group:	We expect suppliers to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are investing in and supporting charities that support nature and circular economy, including conservation, tree planting, repair cafes, regenerative farming and rewilding. In and around our UK / Group HQ we have created wildflower areas, planted trees and shrubs and installed bird boxes. We are taking steps to better understand our direct impacts on biodiversity and nature. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To understand: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – If they have material impacts on biodiversity and the natural environment – What those impacts and resulting risks are – To have a mitigation plan in place.



Waste, resource use and circular economy

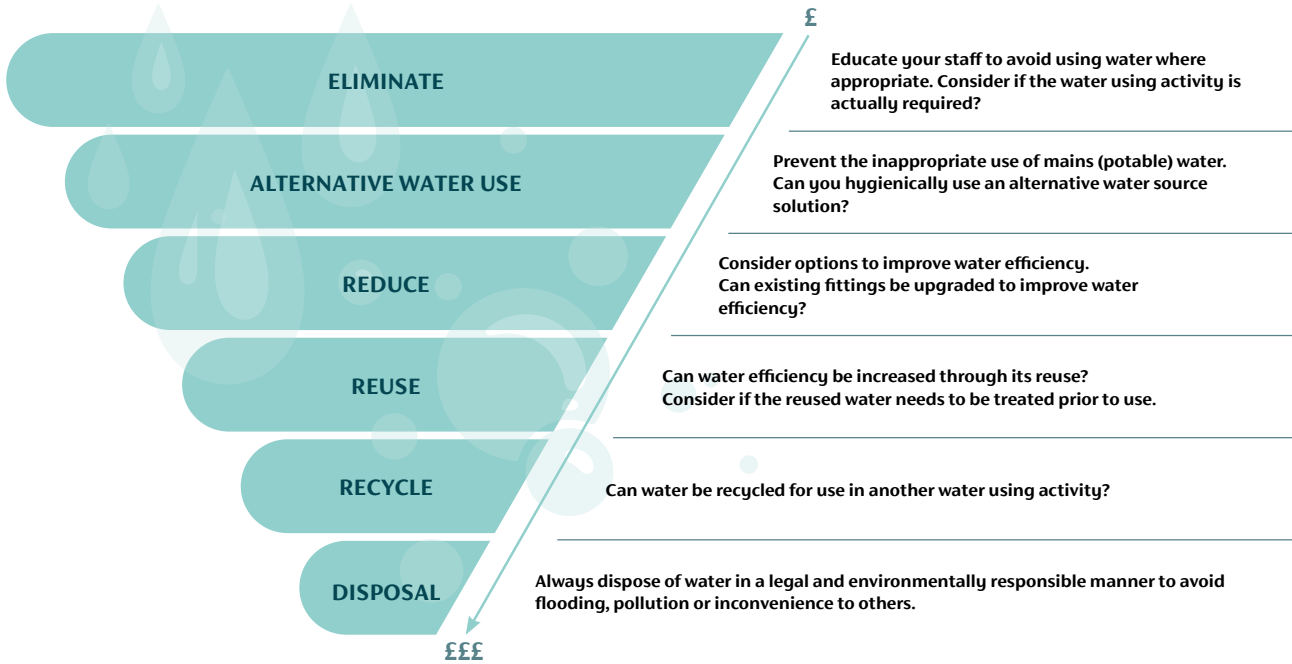
We now need 1.7 earths each year to meet humanity's demands. That is why we advocate a circular economy approach, which means keeping things in use for as long as possible, shrinking our consumption of virgin raw materials and reducing the volumes of waste we produce.

At Benefact Group:	We expect suppliers to:
<p>Waste</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We adhere to the waste hierarchy (illustrated right), by preventing waste where we can, reducing what we cannot avoid producing, reusing what we are able to, recycling as much as possible and composting the waste that remains. We prioritise recycled, recyclable products that have a clear, sustainable disposal route once they can no longer be used for their original (or any other) purpose. <p>Resource use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We are constantly striving to reduce single use plastic We choose bulk and consolidated deliveries to minimise delivery miles and associated emissions, air pollution and congestion. <p>Circular economy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We choose take-back, leasing and other service based models to avoid and minimise waste production and reduce demand on virgin materials. We choose biodegradable or recyclable packaging. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To adhere to the waste hierarchy, with disposal as the last resort. <div data-bbox="842 517 1441 981" style="text-align: center;"> <p>The diagram illustrates the waste hierarchy as a descending funnel with six levels, each with an icon and a label: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PREVENT: Icon of a crossed-out circle. REDUCE: Icon of a downward arrow. REUSE: Icon of a circular arrow. RECYCLE: Icon of a circular arrow with a recycling symbol. RECOVER: Icon of a circular arrow with a recycling symbol. DISPOSE: Icon of a trash bin. </p> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To have a strategy in place to minimise virgin material use, waste, water and energy involved in the manufacturing, using and disposing of your products. <p>We encourage suppliers to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer a take back scheme, be actively minimising packaging, use sustainable packaging along with, consolidated and bulk deliveries.



Water

Since 2012, the World Economic Forum has identified freshwater shortages as one of the top risks to the global economy. We expect our suppliers to be aware of the water hierarchy and where water use is material to their business, to put it into practice.



At Benefact Group:	We expect suppliers to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In our UK / Group head office we have installed motion sensors in our taps, have installed an irrigation hose and irrigation bags to the external planting to save water and improve soil nutrition and structure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To be monitoring and measuring your water use If water use is material to your operations, a water reduction, recycling and management plan in place with absolute reduction targets.



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